

Sister Melannie Svoboda, a Notre Dame nun and author wrote a recent reflection on the grain of wheat that we heard mentioned in our gospel from John today. I would like to share that reflection with you:

How does a grain of wheat feel as it is planted in the soil? To answer that, I imagine interviewing a stalk of wheat, for every stalk was once a grain. Here is what the stalk might say....

I like being a grain of wheat. I was proud of who I was: golden. Smooth. Perfectly intact. But then some farmer dug a hole and tossed me into it. "what's going on?" I asked. But my question was met with silence. Then the dirt came pouring down upon me. I protested, "Hey! You're burying me alive! Stop." But no one heard me.

I sat in total darkness. Afraid. Then I felt something. Moisture. At first, I thought, Good I won't die of thirst." But soon I started to get soggy I sensed my golden color was fading. My smooth exterior became wrinkly. My intactness was breached as I was split asunder. I whimpered, "I'm dying. This is the end of me."

Then something amazing happened. Out of my shriveled, broken, dying self, two shoots emerged. One began pushing upward, the other downward-----both powered by a force within and beyond me. As my

root went down, my shoot went up until it broke through the soil and into the brightness of the sun. I was no longer a grain of wheat-----but something better: a stalk of wheat.

From me would come forth many, many grains of wheat that would help feed the people of the world.

In closing the stalk said, Trust the farmer.....befriend silence and darkness.....embrace transformation.....willingly relinquish your intactness.....believe.....for the ending is really the beginning.”